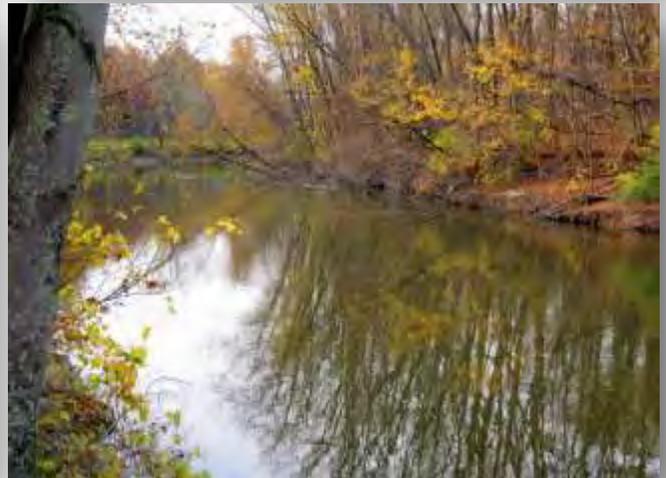


# PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN HURON CHARTER TOWNSHIP



Draft for Public Review  
November 2013



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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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*Assisted by: Carlisle/Wortman Associates, Inc.*



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# INTRODUCTION

The Huron Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan articulates a vision for the Township's parks and recreation. The plan will guide the community's park planning and development efforts over the next five years, through 2018.

The plan is also intended to meet state standards for community recreation planning that are necessary to remain eligible for grant programs.

## WHAT THIS PLAN CONTAINS

The Huron Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan follows the format suggested by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources in the *Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans* (2012). It begins with a brief overview of the plan as well as a description of the **Planning Process** which was used to develop the plan. The plan then presents a **Community Description**, providing information on both the social and physical characteristics of the community. The Township's **Administrative Structure** is next described, including information on budget and funding. A detailed description of the **Parks and Recreation Resources** follows this section and presents the recreational resources located both in and around the Township. The **Public Participation and Needs Assessment** section presents the input received from Township officials and residents, which helped in formulating the plan's **Goals and Objectives**. The **Action Program** then provides an action plan and strategies for implementation. Finally, the **Supporting Documents** include the resolutions and notices documenting the plan's adoption by the Huron Charter Township Board of Trustees.

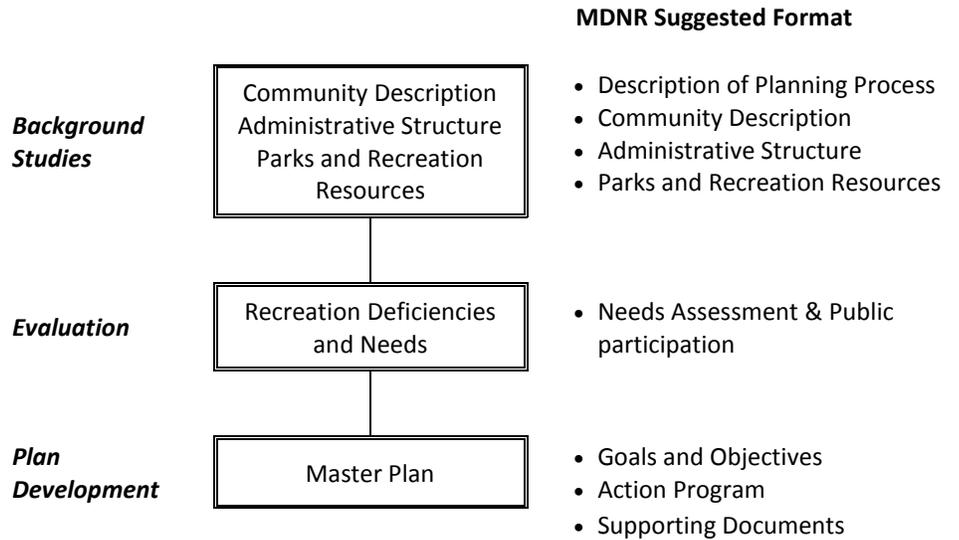
## PLANNING PROCESS

The process used to generate the plan consisted of three phases: background studies, evaluation, and plan development:

1. **Background Studies.** This phase involved gathering and updating information from census data, existing documents, plans, and from field observations. The information is organized into three main categories: community description, administrative structure, and parks and recreation resources.
2. **Evaluation.** The second phase in the planning process consisted of an analysis of the information compiled to determine parks and recreation deficiencies and needs. Public input to assess needs was sought at this level. An online survey was used to receive residents' opinions and ideas. Input from the members of the Parks and Recreation Commission was also gathered.

3. **Plan Development.** Finally, the last phase in the process involved plan development and adoption. Goals and objectives were formulated and a specific action plan developed including strategies and recommendations for the implementation of the plan.

The following diagram illustrates the planning process and how it corresponds to the MDNR suggested format.



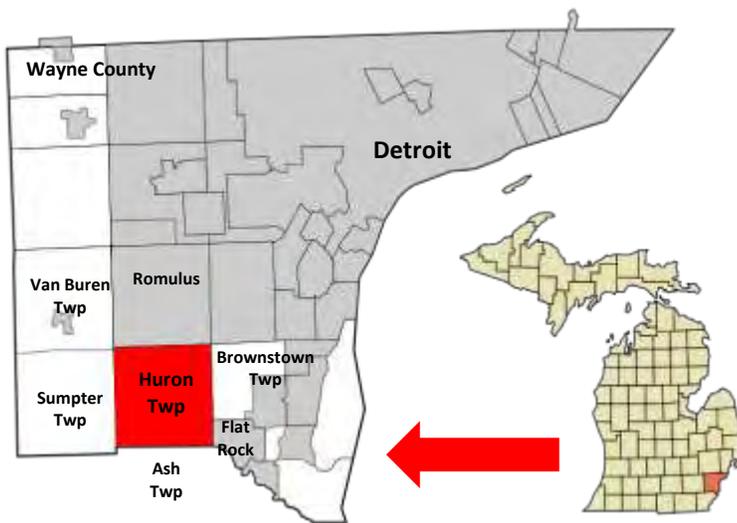
# COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

Located in southern Wayne County, Huron Charter Township is the planning area and jurisdiction covered by this plan. The Township is approximately 36 square miles in size and is bisected by Interstate I-275, which connects with I-75 and I-94, and provides access to the greater region.

The Township is located approximately 25 miles southwest of downtown Detroit, 50 miles north of downtown Toledo, and 30 miles southeast of downtown Ann Arbor. Three unincorporated villages are located within the Township: New Boston, Waltz, and Willow. Waltz and New Boston both contain small downtown business areas and a concentrated residential pattern.

Huron Charter Township is bordered by Sumpter Township to the West, Van Buren Township and Romulus to the north, Brownstown Township and Flat Rock to the East, and Ash Township, Monroe County, to the south.

**Figure 1. Regional Context**



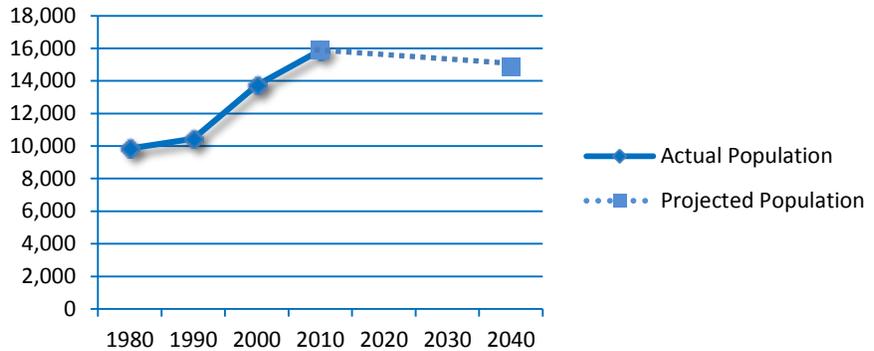
Source: Wikipedia

Wayne County is located in the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) region. SEMCOG is the regional planning agency that conducts planning studies and maintains a comprehensive database of information about the following seven counties: St. Clair, Macomb, Oakland, Livingston, Oakland, Wayne, and Monroe.

## POPULATION GROWTH AND CHARACTERISTICS

The population of Huron Charter Township saw continued population increase between 1980 and 2010. However, SEMCOG predicts that the Township will see a slight decline in population through 2040.

**Figure 2. Population, 1980-2040**



Huron Township had the following number of people from 1980 to 2010:

- 9,849 in 1980,
- 10,447 in 1990,
- 13,737 in 2000, and
- 15,879 in 2010.

SEMCOG estimates that 15,683 people lived in Huron Charter Township in 2012, and projects that 14,884 people will live in the Township in 2040 (July 2013 Community Profile). This represents a 61 percent growth between 1980 and 2010 and a 6 percent decrease between 2010 and 2040.

To put this growth in perspective, table 1 compares Huron Township's population between 2000 and 2010 with other communities in the immediate area. Between 2000 and 2010, Huron Township had an average growth rate at over 15 percent when compared to adjacent communities. Brownstown Township to the east experienced the largest growth at 33 percent, while Romulus to the north saw the lowest growth rate at 4.4 percent. Overall, Wayne County's population declined by 12 percent.

**Table 1. Regional Population Change**

Community	2000 Census	2010 Census	Change 2000-2010	% Change 2000-2010
<b>Huron Township</b>	<b>13,737</b>	<b>15,879</b>	<b>2,142</b>	<b>15.6%</b>
Ash Township	5,048	5,438	390	7.7%
Sumpter Township	11,856	9,549	-2,307	-19.5%
Brownstown Township	22,989	30,627	7,638	33.2%
Romulus	22,979	23,989	1,010	4.4%
Flat Rock	8,488	9,878	1,390	16.4%
Van Buren Township	23,559	28,821	5,262	22.3%
<b>Wayne County</b>	<b>2,061,162</b>	<b>1,820,584</b>	<b>-240,578</b>	<b>-11.7%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Between 1980 and 2010, Huron Township had the following household numbers:

- 3,167 in 1980,
- 3,512 in 1990,
- 4,745 in 2000, and
- 5,781 in 2010.

The number of households with children increased slightly from 2,042 in 2000 to 2,124 in 2010, reflecting a small 4 percent increase, while the number of households with seniors increased significantly from 3,966 in 2000 to 4,556 in 2010, reflecting a 15 percent increase in the 10-year span.

SEMCOG estimates Huron Township currently has 6,133 households and projects that there will be 6,042 households in 2040 (July 2013 Community Profile). This represents an 91 percent household growth from 1980 to 2040.

In summary, there has been a continued increase in population and households in the Township between 1980 and 2010, with a recent slight decrease in population. Recent trends since 2000 indicate a leveling of the population, consistent with growth observed in Southeast Michigan. The increase of households with seniors, age 65 or more, is particularly notable. Projections show that this trend will continue for both population and households, while household size will continue to decrease. These trends reflect many factors including families with fewer children, aging population, and changes in the mix of households, and recent economic conditions.

**Table 2. Population and Household, 2000-2040**

	2000 Census	2010 Census	July 2013 (SEMCOG)	2040 Forecast
<b>Population</b>	<b>13,737</b>	<b>15,879</b>	<b>15,683</b>	<b>14,884</b>
<b>Households</b>	4,745	5,781	6,133	6,042
<b>Household Size</b>	2.87	2.73	2.70	2.45
<b>Household Types</b>				
<b>Households with Children</b>	2,042	2,124	n/a	n/a
<b>Households with Seniors</b>	779	1,225	n/a	n/a

*n/a: not available*

*Source: SEMCOG Community Profile and U.S. Census Bureau*

### Children and Seniors

Projections by SEMCOG indicate that by 2040, the number of children aged under 18 will decrease by 1,114, representing a 28 percent decrease from 2010 numbers. On the other hand, the number of people 65 years and older will increase by 1,702, representing a 104 percent increase from 2010. The population aged 35 to 59 is also projected to decrease by 20 percent between 2010 and 2040.

**Table 3. Age, 2010-2040**

	2010 Census	2040 Forecast	Change 2010-2040	% Change 2010-2040
<b>0 - 4</b>	945	706	-239	-27.8%
<b>5 - 17</b>	3,062	2,187	-875	
<b>18 - 24</b>	1,337	1,087	-259	-15.5%
<b>25-34</b>	1,681	1,711	30	
<b>35-59</b>	6,230	5,001	-1,229	
<b>60-64</b>	979	854	-125	
<b>65-74</b>	1,056	1,735	679	103.5%
<b>75+</b>	589	1,612	1,023	

Source: SEMCOG Community Profile and U.S. Census Bureau

### Diversity

From 2000 to 2010, Huron Charter Township became slightly more diverse with the white population decreasing from 94.3 percent to 90.8 percent of the total population, while persons of other racial and ethnic origins increased. Black, Asian, and other races make up approximately 6 percent of the total population. Hispanics of any race comprise about 3.2 percent of the Township's population.

**Table 4. Race and Hispanic Origin, 2010**

	2010 Census	
<b>White</b>	28,942	90.8%
<b>Black</b>	870	2.5%
<b>Asian</b>	724	0.7%
<b>Multi-Racial</b>	448	2.1%
<b>Other Race</b>	108	0.7%
<b>Persons of Hispanic Origin</b>	1,329	3.2%

Source: SEMCOG Community Profile and U.S. Census Bureau

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### Education

According to the American Community Survey, 14 percent of the Township's population above age 25 held a bachelor's or higher degree in 2010. This is lower than both the SEMCOG area (29%) and Wayne County (20%) numbers.

### Income

The median household income in 2010 was \$56,535, down by 28 percent from 2000. The per capita income amounted to \$25,883, down by 16 percent from 2000. The American Community Survey reports an increase in the number of persons in poverty from 5.7 to 10.8 percent of the Township's population and an increase in the number of households in poverty from 4 to 11 percent.

### Employment

According to the American Community Survey, the strongest employment sectors in the Township in 2010 were:

- Manufacturing,
- Educational services and health care/social assistance, and
- Transportation and warehousing/utilities.

**Table 5. Employment by Industry, 2007-2011**

Employment Sectors	Employed Population	% Employed Population
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	78	1.1%
Construction	274	3.8%
Manufacturing	1,567	21.7%
Wholesale Trade	285	4%
Retail Trade	615	8.5%
Transportation & Warehousing/Utilities	700	9.7%
Information	131	1.8%
Finance/Insurance & Real Estate	394	5.5%
Professional Management & Administrative Services	492	6.8%
Educational Services & Health Care/Social Assistance	1,526	21.2%
Cultural, Accommodation & Food Services	638	8.9%
Public Administration	262	3.6%
Other	244	3.4%
<b>Total Employment</b>	<b>7,206</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: 5-Year American Community Survey, 2007-2011

## HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Growth in the local housing stock continued to exceed population growth between 2000 and 2010, which corresponds with the decrease in household size. The number of housing units increased by 1,052 units, or 22 percent between 2000 and 2010, while the population increased by 16 percent during the same period.

While single-family detached homes are predominant (67%), mobile/manufactured housing account for 25 percent of the housing stock. Based on the number of new units permitted between 2010 and 2013, 48 out of 51 have been single-family detached units.

**Table 6. Housing, 2000-2010**

	2000 Census	2010 Census	Change 2000-2010	New Units Permitted 2010-2013
<b>Single-Family Detached</b>	3,272	3,965	693	48
<b>Duplex</b>	42	12	-30	0
<b>Townhouse/Attached Condo</b>	44	387	343	3
<b>Multi-Unit Apartments</b>	41	92	51	0
<b>Manufactured Houses</b>	1,489	1,484	-5	0
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>4,888</b>	<b>5,940</b>	<b>1,052</b>	<b>51</b>

Source: SEMCOG Community Profile and U.S. Census Bureau

While renter-occupied units have increased between 2000 and 2010, most housing units (86%) in 2010 were still owner-occupied. Only 9 percent of units were renter-occupied. It should be noted that five percent of housing units were vacant in 2010, an increase of 179 units from the 2000 number.

**Table 7. Housing Tenure, 2000-2010**

	2000 Census	2010 Census	Change 2000-2010
<b>Owner Occupied Units</b>	4,435	5,237	802
<b>Renter Occupied Units</b>	310	544	234
<b>Vacant Units</b>	143	322	179
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>4,888</b>	<b>6,103</b>	<b>1,215</b>

Source: SEMCOG Community Profile and 5-year American Community Survey

According to the American Community Survey, the Township's median housing value in 2010 was \$179,700, representing an increase of \$5,798 from 2000 to 2010. Similarly, the median gross rent was \$890 in 2010, representing a \$209 increase from the 2000 number.

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## LAND USE PATTERNS AND DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

The presence of I-275 and the close proximity of Detroit Metropolitan Airport have made Huron Charter Township a great location for industrial and commercial parks. Most residential developments that have occurred in the Township have resulted in varied lot sizes where 40-acre parcels are adjacent to 1-acre suburban lots and 10-acre rural lots. Figure 3 illustrates existing land uses in Huron Township while Table 8 presents their extent.

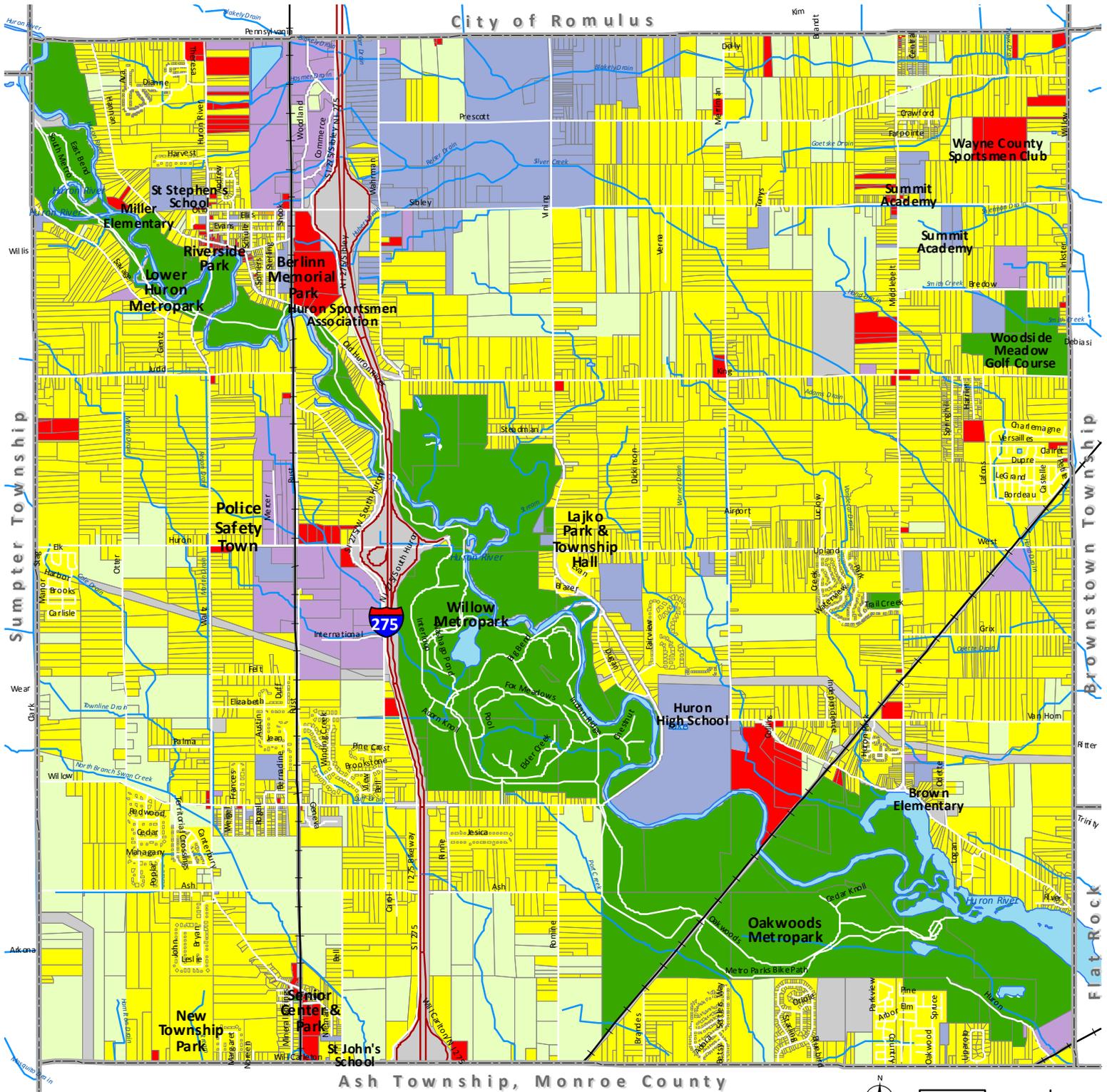
A substantial amount of land, 3,643 acres or 16 percent, is classified as park, recreation, and open space. This is due in large part to the more than 3,000 acres of land owned by the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority (HCMA, also known as Huron-Clinton Metroparks) along the Huron River corridor.

**Table 8. 2008 Land Use**

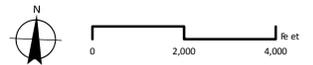
	Acres	Percent
<b>Agricultural</b>	3,252	14.2%
<b>Single-family Residential</b>	12,016	52.3%
<b>Multi-family Residential</b>	1	0%
<b>Commercial/office</b>	512	2.2%
<b>Industrial</b>	756	3.3%
<b>Public/Institutional</b>	1,461	6.4%
<b>Park, Recreation &amp; Open Space</b>	3,643	15.9%
<b>Transportation, Communication &amp; Utility</b>	1,293	5.6%
<b>Water</b>	21	0.1%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>22,954</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: SEMCOG Community Profile

Figure 3. Existing Land Use



- Agricultural
- Single-family residential
- Multi-family residential
- Commercial/Office
- Industrial
- Parks, Recreation & Open Space
- Public/Institutional
- Transportation, Communications & Utility



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## NATURAL FEATURES

The Huron River is the most important natural feature of the Township. It is a critical part of the Township's ecosystem and natural heritage.

Huron Township also contains significant areas of woodlands, wetlands, and open spaces. Figure 4 illustrates the natural features of the Township. Woodlands tend to be located in the areas where the soils are generally less well-suited for farmland. They are scattered throughout the Township and located along the river corridor within the HCMA properties. Wetlands also tend to be located in the low-lying areas associated with the Huron River.

### *Geology, Topography and Soils*

As the glaciers melted and receded to the north, they deposited soils sediment and rocks in the form of till and moraines. Till was typically deposited in a uniform manner as the glacier receded, while moraines were created when the glacier essentially "dumped" its debris in one particular location. The topography and drainage of the area have, therefore, been determined by where and how much glacial debris were deposited in particular areas.

Huron Township is characterized by flat topography and fertile soils. According to the Soil Survey of Wayne County, Michigan, the predominant soil associations in Huron Township are the Pewamo-Selfridge-Corunna Association located in the southern half of the Township. Other associations include the Thetford-Granby-Tedrow Association, Belleville-Selfridge-Tedrow Association, and the Wasepi-Gilford-Boyer Association. These soils are generally suitable for farming and development. However, the high water table and the slow and ponded storm water runoff can result in limitations to septic systems.

### *Woodlands*

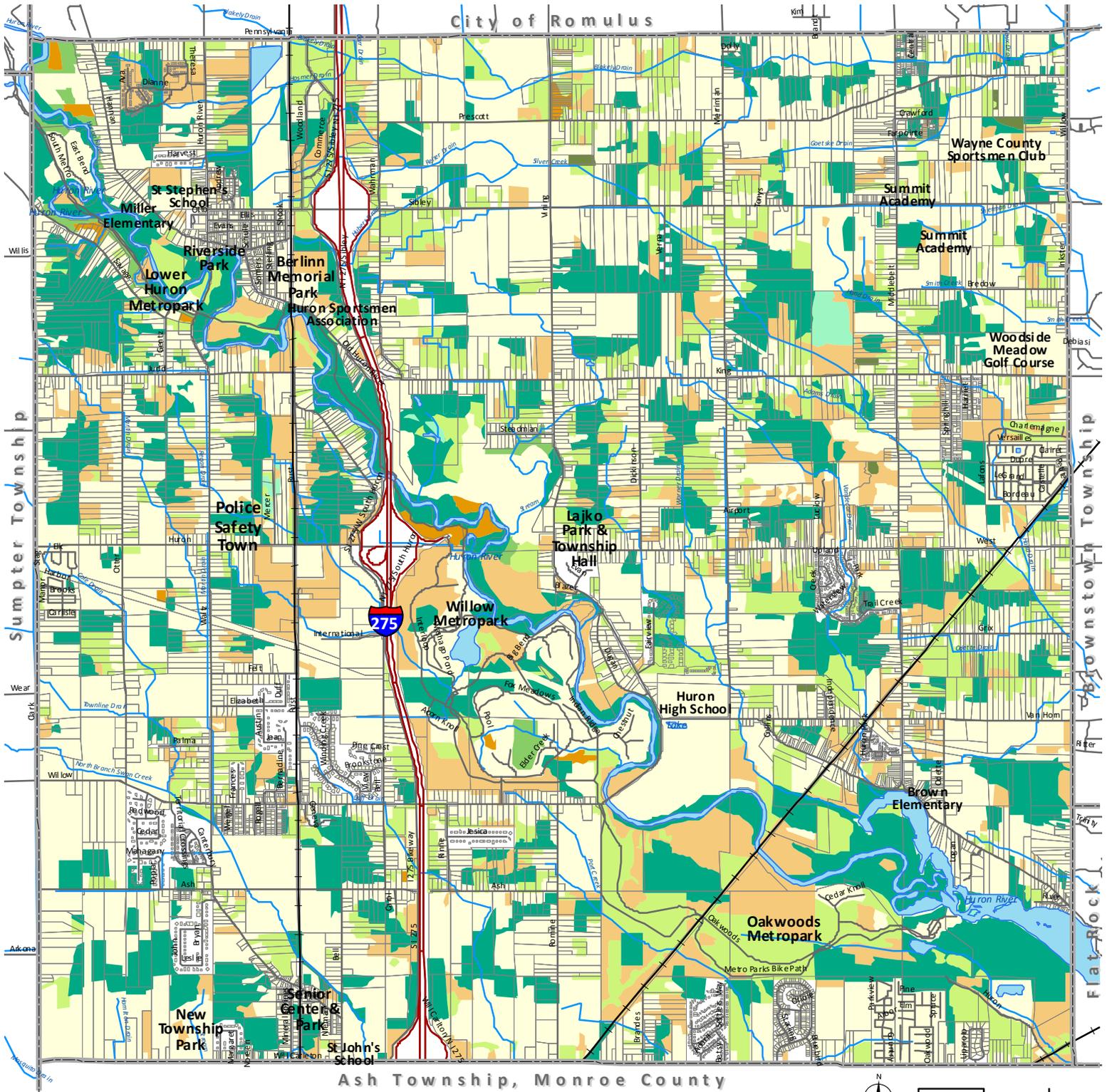
The majority of trees and vegetation that existed in Huron Township prior to agricultural development were cleared. Throughout the Township are parcels of land with smaller isolated pockets of trees, located in the areas where the soils were generally less well-suited for farming. The largest concentration of significant woodlands is located within the Huron Clinton Metroparks.

### *Water Resources*

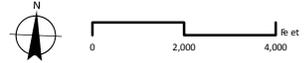
Huron Township is bisected by the Huron River and its associated low-lying wetland and floodplain areas.

According to data gathered from SEMCOG, wetlands amount to about 7,000 acres, or about a third of the Township's area. These wetlands include emergent, forested, and scrub-shrub wetlands and can be found scattered throughout the Township and along the Huron River corridor.

Figure 4. Natural Features



- Herbaceous Areas
- Shrub Land
- Broadleaved Forest
- Coniferous Forest
- Shrub/Scrub Wetland
- Forested Wetland
- Emergent Wetland



## PLANNING INITIATIVES

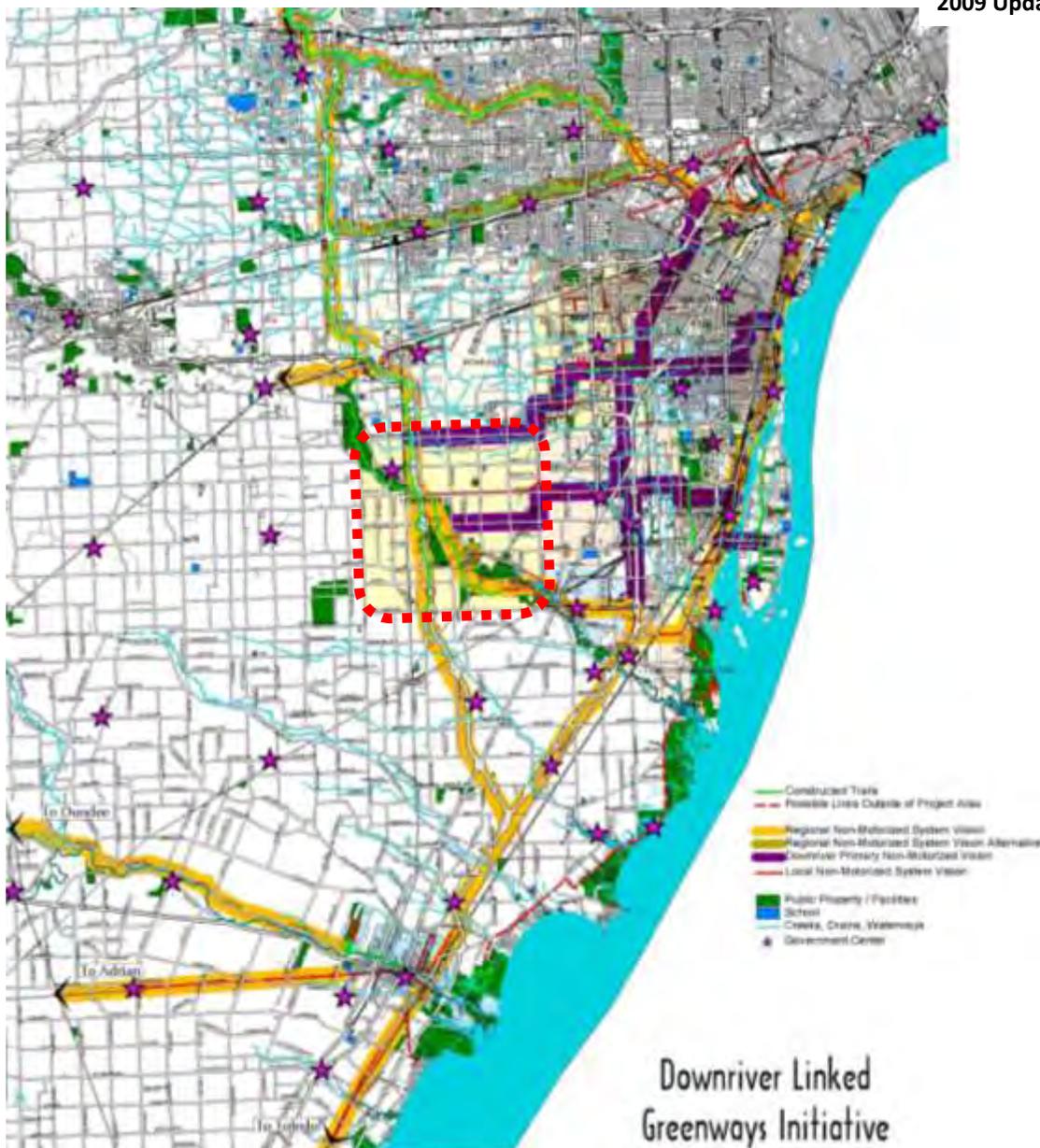
While change is inevitable and growth will occur, Huron Township is committed to managing that growth to enhance economic benefit, recreational activities, and overall quality of life for all residents. A number of planning initiatives related to non-motorized pathway planning and development took place in the region which includes Huron Township.

In 2001, 21 communities along with many business partners, developed the Downriver Linked Greenway Initiative, a master plan that proposed an interconnected system of trails for bicycling and walking in the Detroit Downriver area. The network, shown on Figure 5, consists of the following primary segments: a north-south connector, two Huron-Clinton Metropark east-west connectors, the I-275 trail, and the Monroe-Lake Erie trail.



Downriver Linked Greenway  
2009 Update

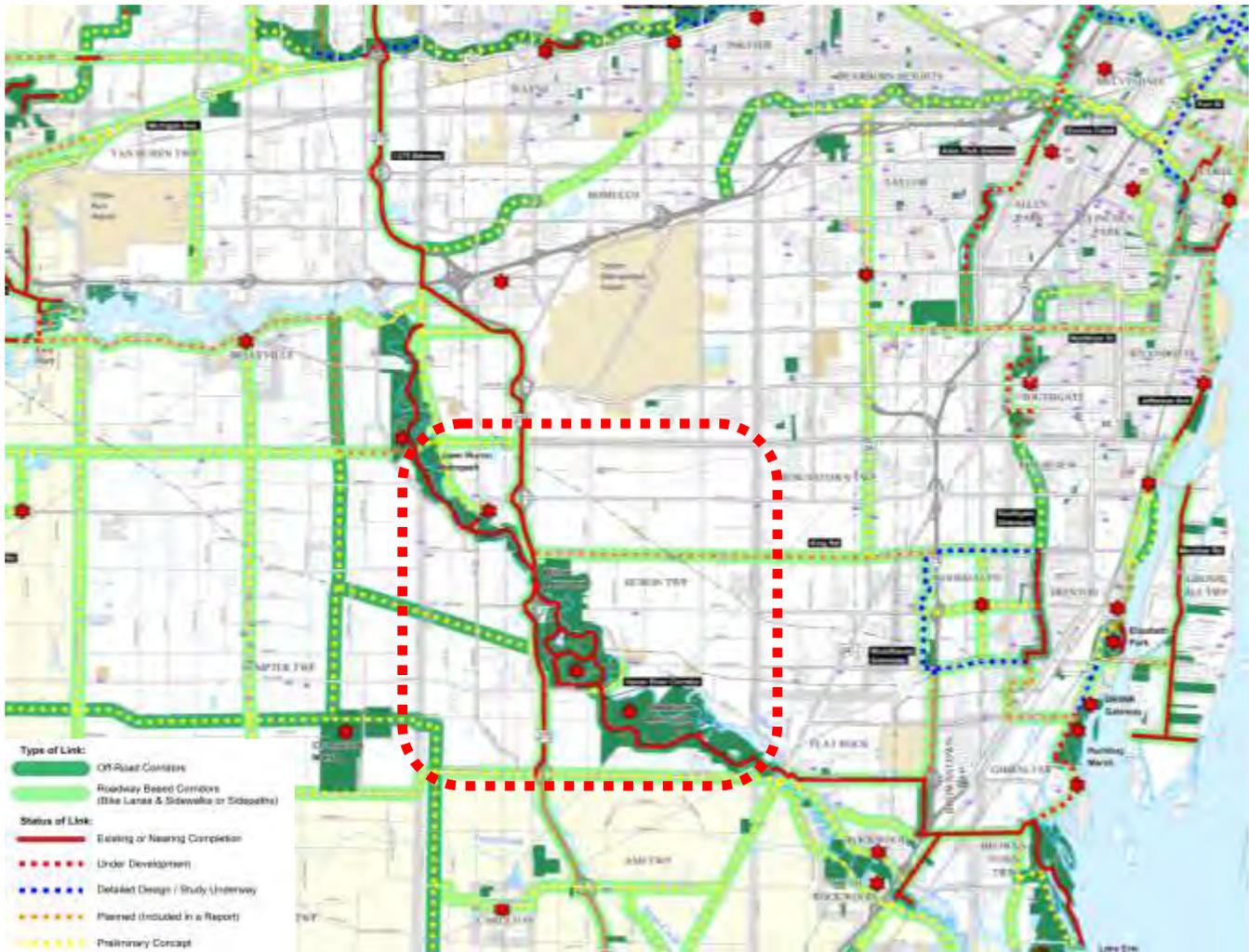
Figure 5. Downriver Linked Greenway



Source: [www.downrivergreenways.org](http://www.downrivergreenways.org)

In 2006, the seven-county region of southeast Michigan updated the Southeast Michigan Greenways Vision to reflect the desired non-motorized connections in the region. This initiative was facilitated by the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan. Counties worked together with local municipalities and community interest groups to develop a long-term vision for a connected system of greenways and trails. Figure 6 depicts the vision for the Huron Township area, identifying the regional framework in which Huron Township belongs.

**Figure 6. Regional Greenways Vision**



Source: Greenways Collaborative, 2006

The vision for trails in Huron Township includes the routes within the Metroparks and the I-275 Metro Trail as well as pathways following major road corridors: along King Road/Huron River Drive, Will Carlton Road, portions of Huron, Willow, and Pennsylvania roads.

Blueways are an outgrowth of the land-based greenways concept—connecting the region by way of the watercourses that knit communities together. Increasingly, blueways are becoming an important recreational component to the region, and more importantly, emphasizing the importance of our water resources.

The Detroit Heritage River Water Trail goes through the Detroit, Huron, Rouge and Raisin Rivers and offers many opportunities for canoeing and kayaking in the region. As depicted on the map in Figure 7, the water trail follows the Huron River up to Belleville through Huron Township with river access and canoe/kayak launches at all three metroparks.

Figure 7. Detroit Heritage River Water Trail Vision Plan



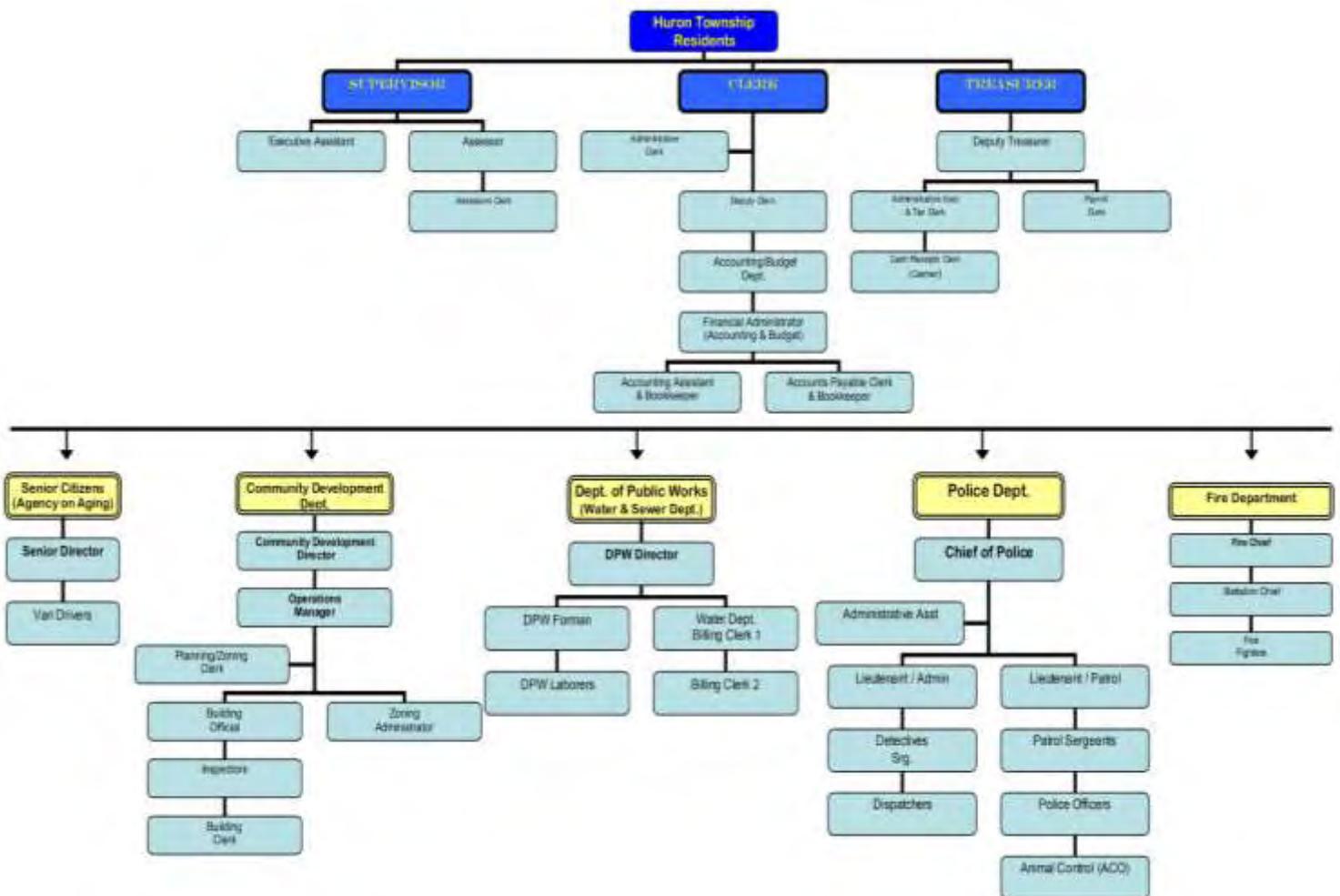
Source: Metropolitan Affairs Coalition, 2006



# ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

The administration of parks and recreation services in Huron Charter Township is the responsibility of the Township Board. Huron Township residents are represented by a seven member board consisting of three officers and four trustees all of which are elected at large every four years. Limited by law in the amount of taxes that can be levied without voter approval, Township officials must be creative in delivering quality services with the least possible burden to taxpayers.

Figure 8. Huron Charter Township Organizational Structure



## ADMINISTRATION

A Parks and Recreation Commission was established in 1979 under Public Act 156 of 1917, Recreation and Playgrounds. The Commission's responsibilities include overseeing the programming, development, implementation, and maintenance of recreation facilities and programs in Huron Township. Maintenance duties are completed by the Department of Public Works. Huron Township currently does not have staff assigned to parks and recreation services.

The Parks and Recreation Commission meets on a bi-monthly basis and has overseen the development of this Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

## FUNDING AND BUDGET

Funding for parks and recreation is appropriated from the Township's general fund. Revenues also come from grants and donations.

Park development and maintenance accounted for the majority of the parks and recreation expenses in Huron Township in the last five years. A portion of the parks and recreation fund is allocated to the Department of Public Works for the maintenance of parks. A budget summary is presented in Table 9.

**Table 9. Huron Township Budget Summary**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Revenues</b>					
Wayne County Grant	\$ 9,961.58	\$ 28,550.68	\$ 9,941.81	-	\$ 23,000.00
Donations	\$ 5,516.08	\$ 6,047.90	\$ 3,885.00	\$ 592.00	\$ 968.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 15,477.66</b>	<b>\$ 34,598.58</b>	<b>\$ 13,826.81</b>	<b>\$ 592.00</b>	<b>\$ 23,968.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
DPW Services - Wages	\$ 32,014.54	\$ 40,242.10	\$ 10,693.63	\$ 7,220.42	\$ 6,286.92
Supplies	\$ 2,012.13	\$ 5,011.64	\$ 527.94	\$ 786.49	\$ 1,551.57
Professional and Contractual Services	\$ 2,667.50	\$ 225.00	-	-	\$ 25.50
Public Utilities	-	-	-	-	\$ 1,716.86
Repairs and Rentals	-	-	\$ 4,900.00	-	-
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$ 408.33	\$ 385.00	-	-	-
Capital Outlay - Land Improvements	\$ 17,510.13	\$ 30,943.94	\$ 6,305.50	\$ 2,162.00	\$ 98,314.45
Community Promotions - Programs	\$ 12,031.14	\$ 9,873.94	\$ 30.51	\$ 1,441.84	\$ 1,672.09
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 66,643.77</b>	<b>\$ 86,681.62</b>	<b>\$ 22,457.58</b>	<b>\$ 11,610.75</b>	<b>\$ 109,567.39</b>
General Fund Subsidy	\$ (51,166.11)	\$ (52,083.04)	\$ (8,630.77)	\$ (11,018.75)	\$ (85,599.39)

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## VOLUNTEERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Volunteers, service clubs, community groups, and private businesses play an active role in supporting parks and recreation in Huron Township.

Huron Township maintains a relationship with the Huron Public School District, which owns and maintains various recreational facilities and sports fields. The Parks and Recreation Commission, assisted by the YWCA Downriver Outreach, offers many programs taking place at the school facilities.

Other organizations run various athletic recreation programs independently from the Township. They include:

- The Huron Little League, which offers T-ball, softball, and baseball programs in the Spring for children ages 5 to 18 using the fields at Huron High School;
- The Huron Youth Soccer, which offers programs in the Fall and Spring taking place at Huron High School and at Willow Metropark;
- The Huron Chief Junior Football, which offers programs for kids from 1st grade to 6 grade in the Fall with practices and games taking place at Huron High School;
- The Huron Youth Basketball Association (HYBA), which offers a Fall girls' basketball program and a Winter boys' basketball program, with practices taking place at the elementary schools and games at Huron High School.

Service clubs and community groups also play a significant role in providing volunteer labor and financial support for the area's park facilities and recreation programs. Some of the service clubs and community groups in Huron Township include:

Local service clubs:

- Rotary
- Senior Center
- Garden Club

Fraternal organizations:

- Kiwanis Club
- Lions Club
- Masonic Lodge

Scouting Groups:

- Boy Scouts of America
- Huron Valley Girl Scouts



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# PARKS AND RECREATION RESOURCES

The residents of Huron Township have a variety of available recreational resources at the local and the regional levels. There are also public and private schools as well as privately-owned facilities in the area. This section describes these recreational resources. The information provided in this section was derived from a variety of sources including documents and web pages of the related agencies or organizations.

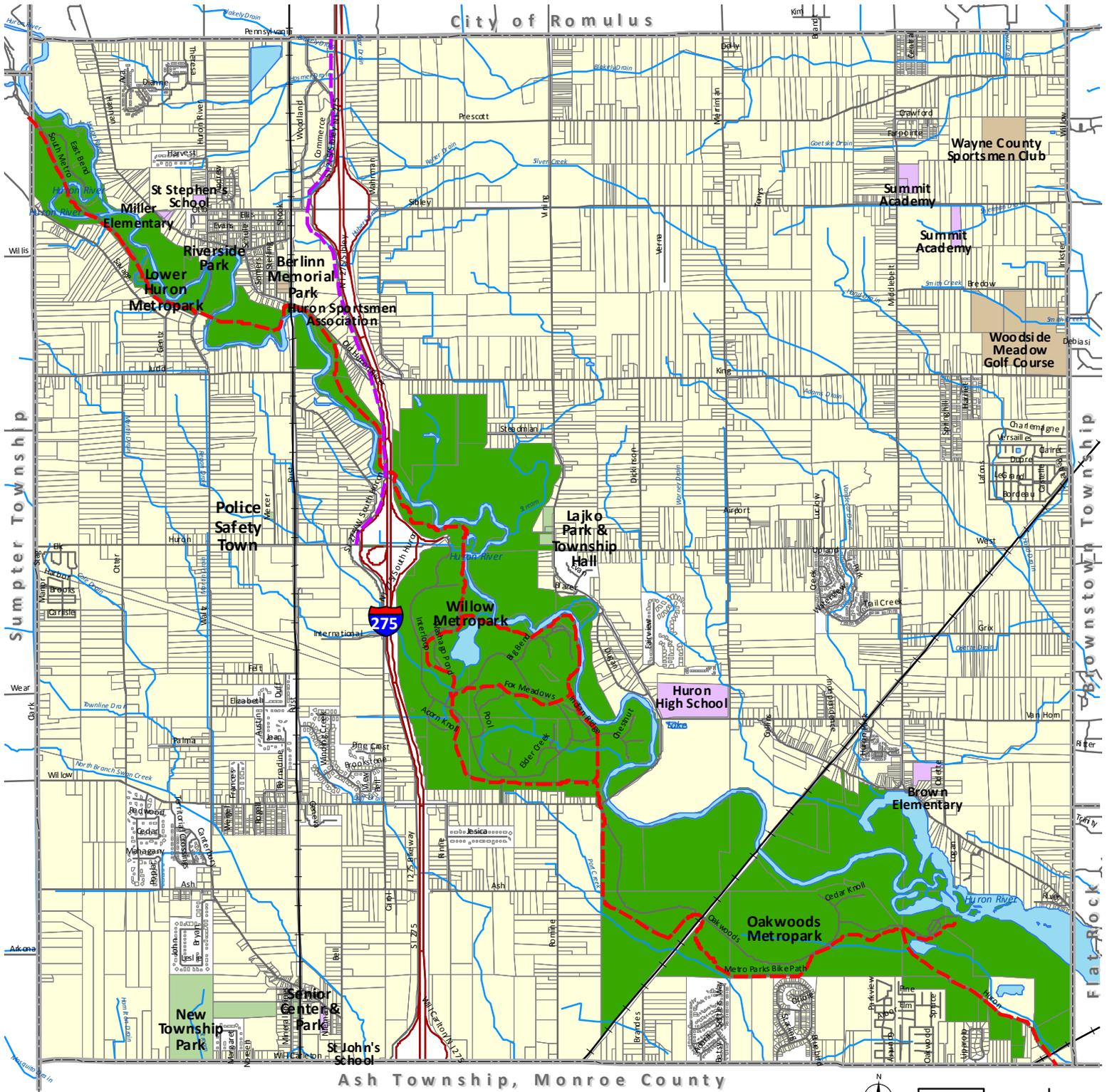
## PARK FACILITIES

### Township Facilities

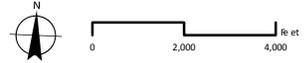
Huron Charter Township owns and operates five parks and a senior center. A profile of each Township park is provided on the following pages.



Figure 9. Parks and Community Facilities



- Township Facilities
- Schools
- Private Facilities
- HCMA Metroparks
- HCMA Shared-Use Path
- I-275 Shared-Use Path



**Berlinn Memorial Park**

Located on Sterling Street in New Boston, Berlinn Memorial Park contains 1 acre of land adjacent to the Department of Public Works yard. It incorporates a variety of play equipment including a play structure, swing set, merry-go-round, a sign, and landscaping.



### Lajko Park

Located on Huron River Drive, adjacent to Willow Metropark Golf and the Huron Township Hall, Lajko Park is the Township's main community park and contains 8.9 acres. Lajko Park includes the following facilities:

- 1 baseball field,
- 1 youth ball field,
- Bleachers,
- Play structures and play equipment,
- Picnic pavilion with picnic tables and fireplace,
- Drinking fountain and bike rack,
- Gravel parking area, and
- Portable restroom.



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### *Waltz Park and New Township Park Property*

With access from Bismark Street in Waltz, and Will Carlton from the south, this new Township property is now the largest park at 102 acres. While the property is largely undeveloped, it includes the old Waltz Improvement Association Park facilities and a newly built baseball field. The property incorporates the following facilities:

- 1 baseball field,
- Bleachers and lights,
- Picnic pavilion with picnic tables, and
- Wooded and wetland areas.





### ***Riverside Park***

Located on Huron River Drive in New Boston, this new 0.25-acre riverfront Township Property is currently being developed with a pathway, seating area, and landscaping. It will incorporate an overlook on the River in the future.



### ***Police Department Safety Village***

Located on Mercer Lane, next to the Police Department in Willow, this 0.37 acre piece of land incorporates miniature size roadways and buildings for safety town programs.



### ***Kryske Senior Center and Senior Park***

Located on Mineral Springs Road in Waltz, the Kryske Senior Center contains .64 acres where the building sits and another 1.99 acres where a school house and the fenced-in Senior Park was recently developed in 2009. The Senior Park incorporates:

- 2 bocce ball courts,
- Picnic pavilion with picnic tables, grill, and drinking fountain,
- Walking paths,
- Landscaped areas.



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## School and Private Recreation Facilities

In addition to the Township park facilities, there are school and private recreation facilities located in Huron Township. There are shown on Figure 7 and are briefly described as follows.

### *School Facilities*

The Huron Public Schools operate four schools within Huron Township. These school facilities play a role in providing recreation opportunities.

- Miller Elementary, located on Hannan Road in New Boston, contains 30 acres of land with a soccer field, a variety of play equipments, and an indoor gymnasium;
- Brown Elementary, located on Middlebelt Road, contains 11 acres with a soccer field, play structures and other play equipment, and an indoor gymnasium; and
- Renton Junior High and Huron High School, located on Huron River Drive on a 52-acre property, incorporates a football field and running track, concession building and grand stand, 4 baseball fields, practice fields, 4 tennis courts, an indoor gymnasium and swimming pool. There are also 3 to 5 soccer fields located on a nearby property.

### *Private Facilities*

There are a number of private schools and commercial recreation facilities in Huron Township which include recreation amenities. While they do not provide public access, they are important in providing recreation opportunities. Some of these facilities are listed below.

- St. Johns School, located on Waltz Road on 4 acres, includes a ball field, soccer field, playground, and an indoor gymnasium;
- St. Stephen School, located in New Boston on Huron River Drive, includes 10 acres of land with two ball fields, one soccer field, a playground, and an indoor multi-purpose room and activity center;
- Summit Academy, located on Middlebelt Road on a 19-acre property, includes basketball hoops, play structure, other play equipment, and an indoor gymnasium;
- Summit Academy, located on Sibley Road on a 14-acre property includes a basketball court and soccer field.
- Huron Sportsman Association, located in New Boston adjacent to Berlinn Memorial Park, includes 1.6 acres with a baseball field;
- Kentuckians of Michigan Park, located on Bredow Avenue adjacent to Woodside Meadow Golf Course, incorporates an activity building with modern facilities on 25 acres;
- Wayne County Sportsman's Club, located in the northeast corner of the Township, includes 51 acres of land with an archery and skeet range; and
- Woodside Meadow Golf Course, located on King Road, is an 18-hole golf course with a bar/restaurant on a 41-acre property.

## Regional Facilities

There are over 3,000 acres of park land owned by the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority in Huron Township. In addition, there are over 6,750 acres of federal and state-owned parks and recreation areas, 6,152 acres of Huron-Clinton Metroparks, and over 2,345 acres of Wayne County parks within an hour's drive of Township. These parks are considered regional recreational facilities.

These regional facilities incorporate large areas and provide recreation opportunities such as swimming, boating, hiking, hunting, camping, and golfing, which are typically beyond the ability of a local municipality to provide. Figure 8 depicts the location of the regional parks around Huron Township and Table 10 lists the recreational activities they offer. A detailed description of the Huron-Clinton Metroparks located within Huron Township follows.

**Figure 10. Regional Recreation Facilities Around Huron**



Source: Michigan Byways and Flyways

Table 10. Regional Parks

		Wayne County Parks			HCMA Metroparks				State & Federal Land			
		Crosswinds Marsh 1,000 Ac.	Elizabeth Park 162 Ac.	Lower Rouge 1,183 Ac.	Oakwoods Metropark 1,756 Ac.	Lake Erie Metropark 1,607 Ac.	Lower Huron Metropark 1,258 Ac.	Willow Metropark 1,531 Ac.	Erie State Game Area 1,519 Ac	Pointe Mouillee State Game Area 3,466 Ac.	Sterling State Park 1,300 Ac.	Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge – 465 Ac.
Passive	Picnicking	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	
	Play Areas			●		●	●	●			●	
	Restrooms		●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●
Trails	Paved Trail		●		●	●	●	●			●	
	Nature Trail				●	●	●				●	
	Hiking Trail	●	●		●	●	●	●	●		●	
	Equestrian Trail	●			●							
Water Activities	Swimming Beach										●	
	Swimming Pool						●	●				
	Water Park						●					
	Wave Pool					●						
	Boating					●	●	●			●	
	Boat Rental							●				
	Canoe/Kayak Rental					●						
	Boat Launch		●			●			●	●	●	
Fishing	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●		
Winter Activities	Ice Skating		●				●	●				
	Tobogganing							●				
	Sledding					●		●				
	Cross-country Skiing	●	●		●	●	●	●			●	
	Ski Rental							●				
Interpretive Facilities	Nature Center				●	●						
	Wildlife Viewing	●			●	●			●	●	●	●
	Historic Interpretation		●									
Court & Turf Games	Ball Fields		●	●		●	●	●				
	Court Games					●	●	●				
	Skate Park							●				
Misc.	Disk Golf							●				
	Driving Range					●		●				
	Golf Course					●	●	●				
	Marina		●			●						
	Hunting								●	●		
	Camping						●				●	
	Group Camping						●					

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### ***Lower Huron Metropark***

The park covers 1,258 acres along the Huron River, the southern part of which is located in Huron Township, and includes mature woodlands and grassy meadows. Access and parking are from Waltz Road. It offers scenic picnic areas, basketball, volleyball, tennis courts, 18-hole par-3 golf course, canoeing, hike-bike trails, and two self-guided nature trails. In the winter, the park has ice skating ponds and cross-country skiing. The park features Turtle Cove Aquatic Center, a water park with water slides, sprayscape, endless lazy river and zero-depth entry pool with lap lanes. There is also a recently developed 27-site campground, a group campground, and canoe camping.



### ***Willow Metropark***

This 1,531-acre Metropark is accessible from South Huron and Willow roads. It has scenic drives, several picnic areas and shelters, bike and boat rental, a 24-hole disc golf course, a skate park, and play equipment. The park includes a large Olympic-sized swimming pool, splash pad, basketball, tennis, and shuffleboard courts. Winter activities consist of ice skating, sledding, and cross country skiing. A 4.5 mile hike-bike trail circles the park and is connected to Lower Huron and Oakwoods metroparks for a 30-mile round-trip trail. The 18-hole Willow Golf Course is accessible from Huron River Drive, immediately adjacent to Huron Township Hall.





### ***Oakwoods Metropark***

With access from Willow Road, 1,757-acre Oakwoods Metropark features equestrian, hike-bike, and nature trails. The park includes a nature center and 400 acres set aside as a nature study area.



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## RECREATION PROGRAMS

Huron Township provides recreation programs through the YWCA Downriver Outreach. A sample of programs are listed below.

### Special Events:

- Trick or Treat Event
- Pumpkin Carving
- Christmas Tree Lighting
- Easter Bunny Pancake Breakfast/ East Egg Hunt

### Preschool Programs:

- Sports Sampler
- Story Time Cooks
- Preschool Gymnastics
- Little Ninjas

### Youth Programs:

- Princess Dance
- Hip Hop Class
- Babysitting Course
- Child Safety Seminar
- Arts and Crafts
- Kids Power Karate
- Gymnastics
- Cheer/Tumble

### Adult Programs:

- Zumba
- Ball Blast
- Women's Self Defense
- CPR/AED/First Aid/Blood Borne Path Certification

In addition, there are also the sports organizations mentioned previously which provides youth sport programs to Huron Township residents.



## ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT & GRANT-ASSISTED PROJECTS

A critical component in planning for recreation facilities is providing access to accommodate the needs of all people, including those with disabilities. The ranking system suggested by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Guidelines (MDNR, 2009) was used to evaluate the accessibility of the area parks. The ranking system ranges from 1 to 5 as follows:

1. None of the facilities meet accessibility guidelines,
2. Some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines,
3. Most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines,
4. The entire park meets accessibility guidelines, and
5. The entire park was developed/renovated using the principles of universal design.

Each of the developed parks was evaluated using the MDNR ranking system noted. The specific elements that were evaluated include parking, paths of travel from parking to activity areas, and the activity areas themselves. Table 11 presents the results of this evaluation.

**Table 11. Accessibility Assessment**

Park	Rank	Description
<b>Berlinn Park</b>	1	Accessible routes should be provided to the park's activity areas including the play structure and equipment and accessible play components added. Accessible parking spots should also be added to the parking area with proper signage.
<b>Lajko Park</b>	2	Accessible routes should be provided to the park's activity areas including the playground, pavilion, and ball field. Accessible parking spots should also be added to the parking area with proper signage.
<b>Senior Park</b>	4	The park complies with ADA standards

All new park construction projects in the Huron Township will be designed to meet or exceed the most recent requirements of the ADA while existing facilities will be brought into compliance as repair and update work are carried out.

Huron Charter Township has been awarded two MDNR grants in 1980 and 1992. Grant funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Recreation Bond fund has been instrumental in developing recreation facilities for Huron Township residents. Table 12 presents a description of the MDNR grants received including the current use and condition of the grant-assisted park facilities.

**Table 12. MDNR Grant Assisted Projects**

Grant Number	Description	Grant Amount	Scope and Current Use/condition
<b>26-01104 N1 1980 LWCF</b>	Huron Township Park (Lajko Park)	\$8,045	Development of a ball diamond, backstop, and fence, parking lot, park shelter and LWCF sign.  The original facilities still exist and are maintained in good conditions.
<b>BF92-102 1992 BF</b>	Berlinn and Lajko Parks - Play Equipment	\$24,000	Development of play structures at Lajko and Berlinn Parks and installation of a drinking fountain and electricity to Lajko Park shelter.  The original facilities still exist and are maintained in good conditions.

BF: Recreation Bond Fund

LWCF: Land and Water Conservation Fund



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# PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

An essential task in the recreation planning process is to determine the needs and desires of the community as a basis for an action plan to improve the community's parks and recreation system. Needs and desires provide the rationale for the formulation of goals and objectives and lead to an action plan. To assess needs and desires, consideration was given to current recreation trends, and input from community stakeholders, public officials, and residents of Huron Township.

## NATIONAL AND STATE RECREATION TRENDS

Recreation trends on a national level and in Michigan provide insight into activities that show the greatest growth in popularity and therefore may affect the future direction of parks and recreation. The National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA) regularly conducts national surveys to measure participation in physical activities and track changes from previous years. Table 13 lists the top seven outdoor activities persons seven years and older participated in at least once in 2010.

**Table 13. National Sports Participation, 2010**

Activity	Participation
Exercise walking	95.8 million
Swimming	51.9 million
Camping	44.7 million
Bicycle riding	39.8 million
Hiking	37.7 million
Fishing	33.8 million

*Source: National Sporting Goods Association*

The top growing outdoor activities between 1999 and 2009 were:

- Exercise walking (increased from 86.3 to 95.8 million),
- Running/jogging (increased from 22.8 to 35.5 million), and
- Hiking (increased from 24.3 to 37.7 million).

These trends are consistent with trends observed in Michigan. According to a telephone survey of Michigan residents conducted as part of the *2013-2018 Michigan Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*, the top outdoor recreation activities are: biking, camping, fishing, walking outdoor, hiking, outdoor games and sports, hunting and trapping, swimming, boating, and visiting a playground.

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Monitoring parks and recreation trends is important to determine how parks and recreation services should evolve. The implication of the trends noted above along with the demographic and physical characteristics of Huron Township can be summarized as follows:

- Future recreation facilities and programs should respond to the expected increase of seniors.
- There is a need for more walk/bike ways to accommodate bicycle and pedestrian recreation use and to contribute to a healthy and walkable environment. Huron Township should focus on making connections with the existing regional hike/bike system found in the nearby Metroparks.
- The Huron River is a great natural asset for Huron Township. Encouraging its use for recreation, while maintaining its ecological functions, should be a priority for the community.



## PARK ACREAGE COMPARISON

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommends a minimum amount of park land to adequately serve a given population. The purpose of the NRPA guidelines is to provide minimum park land standards that are applicable nationwide for recreation planning purposes. While the NRPA standards are useful benchmarks for minimum park acreage, a parks and recreation system should be tailored to meet the needs of the community.

According to the NRPA, parks are categorized as mini-parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, and regional parks. The mini, neighborhood, and community parks are the close-to-home parks, designed to satisfy the recreational needs of local communities. In Huron Township, all the Township parks are considered close-to-home parks. According to NRPA standards, the suggested amount of close-to-home park land is 6.25 to 10.5 acres for every 1,000 residents.

Regional parks serve a broader area and focus on meeting the recreation needs of the region as well as preserving unique areas. For Huron Township residents, regional parks include the federal, state, HCMA, and county-owned recreation resources described in the preceding chapter. The NRPA also recognizes other types of parks such as school properties, which can contribute to the local parks and recreation system.

Table 14 presents a comparison of the NRPA suggested park land standards with existing area parks based on an estimated population of 15,683 in 2012. According to these standards, Huron Township meets the minimum standards for *close-to-home* park land. While not for public use, the school grounds and private parks add some recreation amenities to the Huron Township parks system. Huron Township is also well-served with regional parks located both within the Township and within an hour's drive.

**Table 14. Comparison to Suggested Park land Acreage Standards**

Type of Park	NRPA Standard Acres/ 1000 Population	NRPA Standard Applied*	Existing
Close-to-Home Park land	6.25 - 10.5 Acres	99 - 165 Acres	114.5 Acres
Regional Parks	15 - 20 Acres	236 - 306 Acres	15,000 Acres+

\*Based on 2012 population estimate of 15,683 persons

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## RESIDENT SURVEY

An online survey of residents was conducted from August to October, 2013. Questions focused on participation, and on desired improvements for recreation activities and park facilities. A copy of the questionnaire is included in the Supporting Documents at the end of this report. A total of 59 responses were compiled.

The majority of respondents are Huron Township residents (97%). Most respondents and their household members are between the ages of 35 to 44 with children as part of their households. Only a small proportion of respondents or their household members are 65 or over.

The majority of respondents have visited Huron Township Parks in the past year. Responses indicate the most visited parks are as follows:

1. Lajko Park,
2. Kryske Senior Center and Garden,
3. Police Department's Safety Village, and
4. Berlinn Memorial Park.

The top park facilities respondents rated as very important to extremely important include:

- Walking/bicycling trails (91%),
- Nature trails (85%),
- Playgrounds (73%),
- Picnic areas and pavilions (67%), and
- Outdoor swimming (64%).

The top recreation programs respondents feel are very important to extremely important include:

- Summer recreation program (68%),
- Adult health and fitness classes (55%),
- Youth swim lessons (50%),
- Christmas Tree lighting (47%), and
- Senior programs (47%).

Overall, respondents rate the following suggested improvements as a high to top priority for Huron Township park improvements:

1. Expand recreation programming (60%),
2. Develop the 102-acre park property on Will Carlton Road (55%),
3. Develop more walking/biking trails (53%),
4. Renovate/improve existing parks (50%),
5. Renovate/improve sports fields (50%), and
6. Park land acquisition (20%).

However, 66 percent of respondents also rate park land acquisition as the least to low priority to improve Huron Township parks.

## PUBLIC MEETING

The Huron Township Parks and Recreation Commission met on September 5th, 2013 to review the input received from residents and establish priorities for future actions. A summary of their comments is listed below.

**Table 15. Summary of Comments**

Comments
<b>General</b>
Consider park land acquisition adjacent to existing park properties, to provide walk/bike pathways, and to preserve environmentally sensitive land
Add recreation opportunities for young adults
Create a place for everyone
Reinstate recreation programs
Rehire a recreation director
Connect parks with non-motorized walk/bike ways and to neighborhoods, New Boston, Willow, Waltz, Metroparks, and schools
Create partnerships and more collaboration with area recreation providers including sport leagues, schools, and Huron-Clinton Metroparks
Improve communication and awareness of Township parks and recreation opportunities
<b>Lajko Park</b>
Improve/resurface parking lot
Add walking paths
Consider making the ball field regulation size
Add accessible routes to the park's activity areas
Consider adding permanent restroom
Add a pathway connection from the Township Hall
<b>Berlin Memorial Park</b>
Update play equipment
Improve landscaping
Add a small pavilion
Improve parking area
Add accessible routes to the park's activity areas
<b>New Township Park and Waltz Park</b>
Develop the following park amenities:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access drives from both Oakville-Waltz Road and Bismark Street with parking</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clover leaf- 4 baseball fields</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 to 4 soccer fields</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disk golf</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support facilities: picnic shelter, playground, concession, restrooms</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water feature with a pond for fishing</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amphitheater/event facility</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indoor recreation center</li> </ul>

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## PUBLIC REVIEW AND PUBLIC HEARING

After the Parks and Recreation Commission members considered the input received and reviewed the recreation trends, deficiencies, and other background information, they established the goals, objectives, and an action program for the implementation of this plan. This was done at public meetings held September 5 and November 7, 2013.

A draft plan was then prepared which was made available for public review beginning on November [redacted], 2013. Copies were placed at the Township Hall and [redacted]. The plan's availability for public review was posted at the Township Hall and in the [redacted] (page x). Following the 30-day public review, the Parks and Recreation Commission approved the plan and recommended adoption of the plan by the Township Board of Trustees at a meeting held on January x, 2014 (page x). The public input into the plan culminated in an advertised public hearing held on January x, 2014 (pages x and x). After the hearing, the Township Board adopted the plan (page x).

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# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Huron Township Parks and Recreation Commission has formulated goals and objectives for the next five years. They are broad enough to encompass the suggestions expressed from the public and Township officials as well as to meet the observed deficiencies in the parks and recreation resources of the area. They also consider demographic changes, current and anticipated growth and development, the area's physical resources, and recreation trends.

## GOALS

*Huron Charter Township should provide outdoor recreational opportunities for persons of all ages and abilities.*

*Huron Charter Township should provide clean, safe, and healthy environments for outdoor recreation.*

*Huron Charter Township should consider the future needs of the community and take actions to dedicate park land in order to meet current and future recreation needs and enhance the character of the community.*

## OBJECTIVES

### 1. *Continue to maintain and improve existing park facilities*

Maintaining and improving existing park facilities is a top priority for Huron Township. This entails ensuring park facilities and equipment are clean, safe, functional, and well-maintained.

More specifically, it includes replacing and upgrading aging park equipment and furnishings, ensuring safety surfaces under playground equipment meet regulated depth and fall zones, removing barriers to universal access, maintaining and refurbishing parking surfaces, athletic field and equipment care, and general park upkeep.

This objective also includes improving and developing currently undeveloped Township properties and existing parks in response to the changing needs of Township residents.

### 2. *Establish important linkages and a continuous pathway system*

While the Township has a significant wealth of walk/bike ways with the Metropark's hike/bike pathway and the I-275 Metro Trail, there is a strong need and desire for linkages to these systems with a Township-wide non-motorized system that would connect parks, community facilities, schools, businesses, and neighborhoods. The establishment of an interconnected, multi-modal, easily accessible, and safe walk/bike way system is also recognized as a priority for Huron Township.

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Coordination with the Township Board of Trustees, Planning Commission, the Downtown Development Authority, the Huron-Clinton Metroparks, and other groups will be necessary to realize a Township-wide system.

**3. *Acquire and dedicate new park land***

Potential park land acquisition should focus on land adjacent to existing parks, and on land presenting walk/bike way development and linkage opportunities.

While sidewalks are already required in new developments, dedicating open spaces, bike ways, and close-to-home parks should also be encouraged and promoted. Desired recreation facilities may include a variety of recreation activities such as walking, bicycling, picnicking, and playground.

Coordination with the Township Board, Planning Commission, and the Downtown Development Authority will be necessary to acquire land for the development of parks and walk/bike ways.

**4. *Enhance partnerships with other recreation providers***

The Huron Township Parks and Recreation Commission, in partnership with the YWCA, strives to provide exceptional services that are financially sustainable and respond to residents' desires and interests. Demographic and recreation trends indicate an increase in the number of active mature adults as well as an increase in the popularity of exercise and fitness-related activities.

Continued partnerships with the various area public and private recreation providers including the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, Wayne County, Huron Township's public and private schools, sport organizations, and others are desirable to get the most out of the area's recreation potential.

**5. *Provide for the efficient administration of parks and recreation services***

A quality park, recreation, greenway, and open space system is dependent on the prudent use of available funds. A means of generating revenues through grants, sponsorships, donations, or user fees should be a priority to provide park development and capital improvement projects in Huron Township.

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# ACTION PROGRAM

The action program details the manner in which the goals and objectives will be met. It includes a list of specific projects to be accomplished over the next five years, as well as a suggested project schedule, timing, and strategies for implementation. These actions are generally grouped by park or facility and address the issues identified through the survey of residents, at the public meeting, current national, state, and regional recreation trends, park acreage standards, and the maintenance needs of the Township parks.

## ACTION PLAN

The following outlines the specific projects and actions which are recommended to be accomplished during the planning period. Illustrations showing the proposed park improvements and actions are also included to depict the proposed actions.

### ***1. Maintain and upgrade existing park facilities (all parks)***

This action includes replacing or repairing old equipment and facilities which are in a state of disrepair, are outdated, or dangerous. It also includes improving the appearance of the Township parks through appropriate landscaping and maintenance. All upgrades must meet safety and accessibility standards. Proposed actions include:

- Remove/replace outdated play equipments;
- Maintain safety surfaces under play structures to regulated depth and fall zone;
- Refurbish athletic field surfaces as needed;
- Refurbish parking areas, walkways, and court game pavement surfaces as needed;
- Replace/add park furnishings such as benches, trash receptacles, and signs;
- Maintain structures and picnic shelters in good condition with roof repair, exterior painting, and other; and
- Work with the Downtown Development Authority and other civic groups to add attractive landscaping by park signs, park entries, and at other locations.

## 2. Maintain and improve Berlin Memorial Park

Proposed improvements to Berlin Memorial Park include:

- Upgrade/replace outdated play equipment;
- Refurbish safety surfaces;
- Improve landscaping for shade, screening, and interest;
- Provide small parking area from Sterling Street;
- Add accessible routes to the park's activity areas; and
- Add a small picnic pavilion.

Figure 11. Berlin Memorial Park Development Plan



### 3. Maintain and improve Lajko Park

As the central community park, Lajko Park is important for future enhancement. Proposed improvements include:

- Improve parking area surface and implement storm water run-off control measures;
- Add accessible paths to connect to the park's activity areas, around the property, and to connect to the Township Hall property; and
- Consider making the ball field regulation size.

Figure 12. Lajko Park Development Plan



#### 4. Maintain and improve the new Township Park

As the new community park, which contains environmentally sensitive wetlands and nature areas, the New Township Park is important for future enhancement. Proposed improvements include:

- Develop an entry drive with a small parking lot and park sign from Bismark Road;
- Prepare a master plan for the park property which would include a stewardship plan for the protection and enhancement of the environmentally sensitive areas and would propose a second entrance from Oakville-Waltz Road with parking area, park sign, athletic fields, trails, and support facilities such as restrooms, picnic pavilions, court games and playgrounds; and
- Initiate engineering and implementation of the plan.

**Figure 13. New Township Park Development Plan**

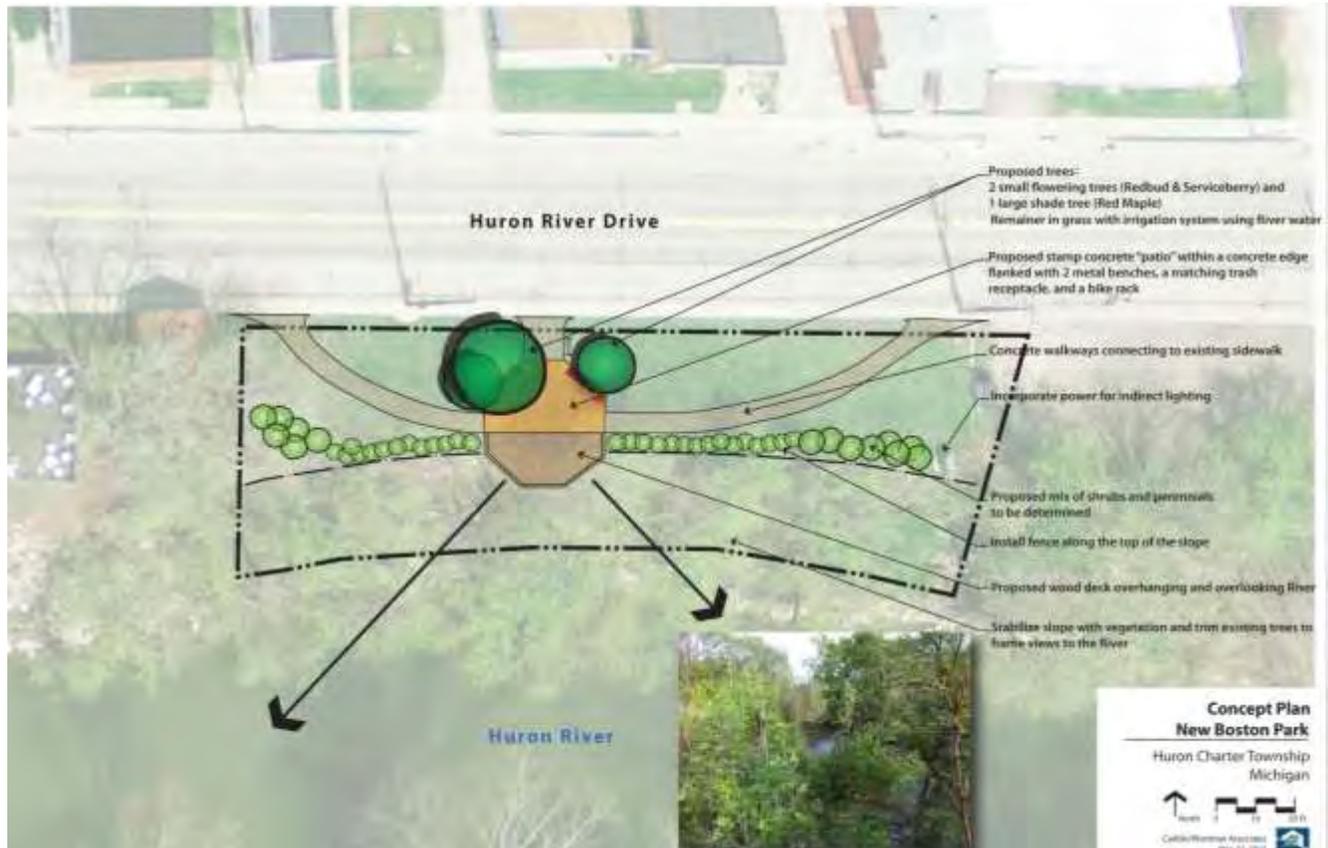


## 5. Maintain and improve the smaller park and Township properties

Proposed improvements to other small Township properties include:

- Support the development of Riverside Park; and
- Support the improvement of Safety Village by adding an accessible route to the area from the parking and with landscaping.

Figure 14. Riverside Park Concept Plan



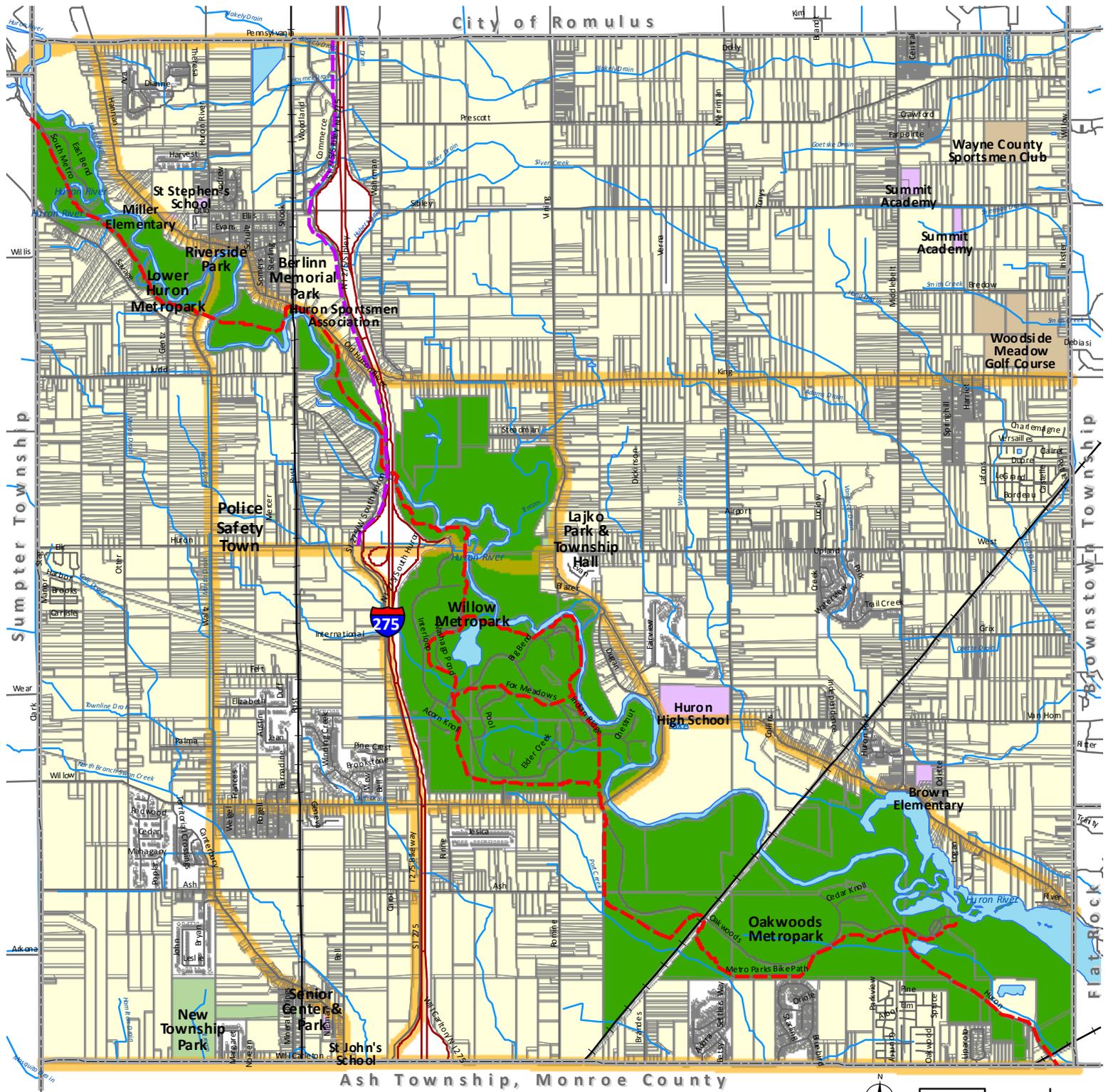
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## **8. *Implement a Township-wide continuous walk/bike way system***

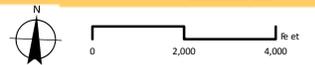
There is a strong need for the development of walk/bike ways in the Township. This would include not only greenways but also blueways, in particular access to the Huron River for paddlers. Proposed actions include:

- Develop a Township-wide non-motorized transportation plan which would identify priority segments for development, establish an implementation program, and identify funding strategies;
- Coordinate non-motorized greenway/blueway development with the Downriver Linked Greenway Initiative, the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, the Huron River Watershed Council, and the Michigan Department of Transportation;
- Work with Township Board and Planning Commission in the review of development proposals to ensure walk/bike ways are built in conjunction with new developments;
- Install pedestrian and bicycle amenities including benches, trash receptacle, bike racks, mile markers, dog waste bag dispensers, and warning/directional signs along walk/bike ways;
- Install canoe/kayak launches as feasible along the River to provide access to the Huron River; and
- Establish a marketing strategy for the walk/bike way system to attract support and sponsors including the development and refinement of a brochure and map.

Figure 15. Township-wide Potential Pathway System



- Township Facilities
- Schools
- Private Facilities
- HCMA Metroparks
- HCMA Shared-Use Path
- I-275 Shared-Use Path
- Potential Future Path Routes



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**9. *Acquire and develop future park land***

- Consider park land acquisition along the Huron River, adjacent to existing parks, and land providing linkages and opportunities for greenway/blueway development; and
- Work with the Township Board and the Planning Commission to ensure park land and open space dedication is considered in future development projects.

**10. *Collaborate and coordinate with other area parks and recreation providers and provide for the efficient administration parks and recreation services***

- Coordinate with the Huron Township area schools, the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, the sports leagues and organizations and other groups and clubs to maintain and provide recreation programs;
- Continue to actively seek sources of funding for park and pathway development through public and private grants, donations, and other fundraising activities;
- Communicate information regarding Huron Township recreation facilities and the Parks and Recreation Master Plan to Huron Township residents through the Township's website and other means; and
- Advocate the goals and objectives adopted in the current Parks and Recreation Master Plan to the Township Board, Planning Commission, and the Downtown Development Authority to ensure parks, trails, and recreation needs are considered in the Township's planning initiatives.

## PROJECT SCHEDULE

Table 16 lists individual capital improvement projects along with the project objective reference, a cost estimate, and potential funding sources. In addition, a time frame for completion has been assigned. Short-term projects (ST) are recommended for completion within one to two years, medium-term (MT) within two to five years while long-term projects (LT) may take longer to complete, within five to six years. There are also tasks that are on-going (OG). Costs are for budgetary purposes only. Further investigations may be necessary to determine engineers probable cost opinions.

**Table 16. Project Schedule**

Project/Tasks	Obj.	Cost Estimate	Funding source	Time Frame
<b>Berlin Memorial Park</b>				
Upgrade/replace outdated play equipment	1	\$20,000-\$30,000	Local Funds	ST
Refurbish safety surfaces	1	\$3,000	Local Funds	OG
Improve landscaping	1	\$5,000	Local Funds, Grants, & Donations	ST
Develop small parking area from Sterling Street	2	Tbd	Local Funds, Grants, & Donations	ST
Add accessible routes to the park's activity areas	1	\$10,000	Local Funds, Grants, & Donations	ST
Add a small picnic shelter/pavilion	1	\$20,000	Local Funds, Grants, & Donations	
<b>Lajko Park</b>				
Improve parking area surface and establish best storm water management practices	1	\$80,000	Local Funds & Grants	ST
Add accessible paths to the park's activity area, around the property, and to connect to Township Hall	1	\$50,000	Local Funds, Grants, & Donations	MT
Refurbish athletic field and consider making it regulation size	1	\$5,000 – \$10,000	Local Funds, Grants, & Donations	MT
<b>New Township Park</b>				
Develop entry drive, small parking lot, and park sign from Bismark Road	1	Tbd	Local Funds & Grants	OG
Prepare development plan to include entry drive and parking area from Oakville-Waltz Road, athletic fields, trails, and support facilities such as restrooms, playground, picnic pavilion, and more	1	\$10,000 - \$20,000	Local Funds	OG

<b>Project/Tasks</b>	<b>Obj.</b>	<b>Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Funding source</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>
Begin engineering and implementation of the plan	<b>1</b>	Tbd	Local Funds	
<b>Other Improvements</b>				
Support DDA's plan for the development of Riverside Park	<b>1</b>	-	-	ST
Add an accessible path from the parking area to the safety village area	<b>1</b>	\$3,000	Local Funds, Grants, & Donations	ST
<b>Township wide Continuous Walk/bike way System</b>				
Work with the Township Board, Planning Commission, and the Downtown Development Authority to develop a Township Non-motorized or Complete Streets Plan	<b>2</b>	Tbd	Local Funds, Grants, & Donations	ST
Develop Huron River access and canoe/kayak boat launch	<b>2</b>	\$10,000	Local Funds, Grants, & Donations	ST
Install site amenities along walk/bike way system including benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, mile markers, and signage	<b>2</b>	\$10,000 - \$20,000	Local Funds, Grants, & Donations	LT
Develop a marketing strategy to attract support and sponsors including the development of a brochure, canoe/kayak and walking clubs, and more	<b>2</b>	\$5,000	Local Funds, Grants, & Donations	MT
<b>Land Acquisition</b>				
Explore park land acquisition along the Huron River and adjacent to existing parks	<b>3</b>	Tbd	Local Funds, Grants, & Donations	OG

Tbd: To be determined

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## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

In order to accomplish the recommended actions during the next five years, it will be necessary to secure adequate funding. The current budget provides a limited amount of money for parks and recreation facilities. Therefore, the following strategies are recommended in order to proceed as planned.

### *Apply for Federal Funding*

At the federal level, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) in conjunction with SEMCOG funds the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). A minimum 20 percent local match is required for proposed projects and applications are accepted online on an on-going basis. Activities which may apply to Huron Township include:

- Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles including new or reconstructed sidewalks, walkways, curb ramps, bike lane striping, wide paved shoulders, bike parking, off-road trails, bike and pedestrian bridges, and underpasses; and
- Provision of safety and educational programs for pedestrians and bicyclists designed to encourage walking and bicycling.

### *Apply for State Funding*

At the state level, the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) and the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) continue to be the primary funding sources for park land acquisition and development. The new Recreation Passport grant also offers some state funding to local units of government.

The MNRTF provides funding for the purchase and development of park land for natural resource-based preservation and recreation.

Grant proposals must include a local match of at least 25 percent of the total project cost. There is no minimum or maximum for acquisition projects. For development projects, the minimum funding request was \$15,000 and the maximum was \$300,000 in 2013. Applications are typically due April 1st.

The LWCF is a federal appropriation to the National Park Service, which distributes funds to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for development of outdoor recreation facilities. The focus of the program has recently been on trail way systems and other community recreation needs such as playgrounds, picnic areas, skate parks, ball fields, soccer fields, and walking paths. Minimum grant requests were \$30,000 and maximum grant requests were \$100,000 in 2013. The match percentage is 50 percent of the total project cost. Applications are typically due on April 1st.

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The Recreation Passport grant program offers funding for the development of public recreation facilities for local units of government. Minimum grant requests were \$7,500 and maximum requests were \$45,000 in 2013. The local match obligation is 25 percent of the total project cost. Applications are usually due on April 1st as well.

Other funding conducted in partnership with the MDNR is available through other state government divisions, such as the Fisheries Division (Inland Fisheries Grants) and the Forest Resources Division (Community Forestry Grants).

The Inland Fisheries programs consider projects that enhance habitat and fisheries, riparian property for public fishing use, water quality, and ecology. While not offered in 2013, they may become available in the future.

Municipalities may use Community Forestry grants to develop a management plan for a municipal forest which would include a component targeting outreach to private landowners. Grant requests may be up to \$20,000 depending on the project type and applications are usually due in the middle of the summer. Detroit Edison also offers tree planting grants for up to \$3,000 to local municipalities in its coverage area.

#### ***Work in Partnership with HRWC and Other Organizations***

Obtaining support for projects will be greatly enhanced with communities that bring together a variety of partners and stakeholders including local and regional agencies and non-profit organizations. There are a number of programs which offer these advantages.

The Huron River Watershed Council (HRWC) has recently initiated the RiverUp! program, along with a core group of community and business leaders. They began to formulate a strategy to realize the goal of a vibrant, robust and fully restored river – a destination for residents and tourists. The goal is to embrace and celebrate the assets of the Huron River for the benefit of local economies and residents, and for the conservation of the natural heritage.

RiverUp! has three long-term objectives:

- *FixUp!* by investing in recreation infrastructure,
- *CleanUp!* by improving the ecological health of the river, and
- *BuildUp!* by facing our communities toward the river and transform the river corridor into a premier destination.

Huron Township could also initiate a Trail Town effort to leverage the Township's existing walk/bike way resources for community and economic development and advance the development of future non-motorized pathways in the Township. This would lead to an assessment of the economic development resources and organizational capacity of the community by bringing together the community stakeholders such as the Downtown Development Authority, the Local Development Finance Authority, chamber of commerce, and other local organizations.

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### ***Apply for Other Grant Funding***

There are also a variety of smaller grant programs available for the establishment of greenways, walk/bike ways, or greenway-related facilities such as Bikes Belong Coalition. The Bikes Belong Coalition is sponsored by members of the American Bicycle Industry. Their mission is to put more people on bikes more often. The program funds projects in three categories: facility, education, and capacity building. Requests for funding can be up to \$10,000 for projects such as bike paths, trails, lanes, parking, and safe routes to school. Applications are reviewed on a quarterly basis.

### ***Increase Support for Parks and Seek Other Sources of Funding***

Public support for parks and recreation will be crucial in determining the level of services the Township will be able to provide in the future. The Township should investigate additional sources of funding. Seeking donations, attracting sponsors, holding fund-raising events, and seeking out other revenue sources are methods that should continue to be pursued aggressively to raise funding for park land acquisition and development.

